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## BOOK REVIEWS

*A Social History of the American Negro.* By BENJAMIN BRAWLEY.  
Macmillan Company, New York, 1921. Pp. 420.

As Negro history has been so long neglected, it will require some time to develop in this field the necessary standard to secure a distinction between the significant and insignificant and between truth and fiction. On account of the emphasis which has been recently given to this study, many novices lacking especially the historical point of view have entered this field because it is so productive that it is an easy task to write a work therein. Benjamin Brawley whose chief preparation and efforts have been restricted to English is one of these novices. Among his first efforts were *A Short History of the American Negro* and *The Negro in Literature and Art*. In neither of these works does he exhibit the knowledge required by the standards of present day historiography. This more recent work although more extensive than the others has no better claim to its being called history.

There can be no question as to many valuable facts contained in this work, but it lacks proportion, style, and accuracy. The book begins with a study of African origins based largely on Wiener's *Africa and the Discovery of America* and upon Lady Lugard's *Tropical Dependency*. He next takes up the Negro in the Spanish exploration but has little or nothing to say about the Negroes in connection with other explorers. His treatment of the development of the slave trade and of the introduction of slavery shows a slightly improved conception of his task. In his discussion of the Negroes in the colonies, into which he works servitude and slavery, the Indian, the mulatto, the free Negro, and efforts for social betterment, he presents a veritable hodgepodge. Passing then to the study of the estrangement from Great Britain, the participation of the Negro in the Revolutionary War, and the effect of that movement upon the Negro's social and political situation, he exhibits no scientific grasp of the status of the Negroes during the eighteenth century or of what they were thinking and doing. The treatment of the new West, the South, and the West Indies, which follows this portion of the book is merely certain generalizations which may be obtained from an

average knowledge of American history and from such topical discussions of the Negro history as may be found in E. A. Johnson's *History of the Negro Race* or in John W. Cromwell's *The Negro in American History*. In his discussion of the Indian and the Negro there is an effort which serves to direct attention to a neglected aspect of our history, that is, to figure out the extent to which the races were associated and the race admixture which resulted from such contact.

Coming nearer to our day to take up the discussion of the Missouri Compromise, the abolition agitation, and the constitutional debate on slavery, Mr. Brawley shows his inability to develop his subject for he merely draws a few facts first from one field and then from another to fill out certain topics in the book without correlating them in such a way that the reader may be able to interpret their meaning. He has endeavored not to write a history but to summarize what other persons are now publishing as selected topics in this field. In other words, he has added to the unscientific history of the Negro, which has hitherto appeared in the so-called text books on Negro history, facts culled from various sources but so improperly used as not to develop the subject.

The chapter on Liberia should have been incorporated into the treatment of colonization or made a supplementary chapter in the appendix of the book. Placed in the middle of the work, it has been necessary to repeat certain facts which could have been stated elsewhere once for all. The same is true of his treatment of the Negro as a national issue, and of social progress, which he takes up the second time as topics inadequately developed in the earlier stages of the treatise. In his discussion of the Civil War, the Emancipation, the Reconstruction, and the Negro in the new South, he says very little which is new. Under the caption *The Vale of Tears*, he drifts almost altogether into opinion as he does also in the case of the *Negro in the New Age* and the *Negro Problem*. Judging, then, from the point of view of an historian, one must conclude that this work does not meet any particular want and that so far as the history of the Negro is concerned the publication of it will hardly result in any definite good. Mr. Brawley does not know history.

*William Lloyd Garrison*. By JOHN JAY CHAPMAN. Moffat, Yard and Company, New York, 1913. Pp. 278.

This is a revised edition of a work of a similar name by this author, published in 1913 by Moffat, Yard and Company, New